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Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2004/05

Summary

The present report provides an overview of major developments in inter-agency cooperation during 2004/05 within the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

In the course of 2004/05, CEB completed its programme of pursuing themes identified in the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. CEB reflections on these themes were designed to provide a system-wide perspective to the process of monitoring and reporting by the Secretary-General on progress achieved in the implementation of the Declaration. In that context, it took up the themes "Bridging the digital divide and fostering inter-agency collaboration in information and communication technology" and "Prevention of armed conflicts" at its fall 2004 and spring 2005 sessions, respectively. While CEB and its structures continued to cover a wide range of issues to ensure greater coherence and build synergies in the actions taken by the system, since 2003 it has given high priority to the elaboration of the system's collective contribution to the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration at the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. A report from CEB entitled "One United Nations — catalyst for progress and change: how the Millennium Declaration is changing the way the United Nations system works" will be presented to the Assembly. CEB also continued to review its support for Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development and for curbing transnational crime, among other issues.

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In the management area, CEB continued to focus on the safety and security of staff and adopted a unified security management system and new approach to cost-sharing and field-related security costs. It also decided on various measures to strengthen managerial capacity across the system and harmonize staff management policies and practices, a common framework for results-based budgeting to guide inter-agency work, and the development of accounting standards for the organizations of the common system.

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I. Introduction

1. Since 2001, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) has built its policy agenda around the themes identified in the Secretary-General's first report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/56/326). In that report, the Secretary-General set out a broad road map for the follow-up process and proposed two topics on which the process might focus each year, leading to a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Declaration in 2005. Thus, in 2002, it took up the treatment and prevention of diseases, including HIV/AIDS and malaria, and the prevention of armed conflict; in 2003, strategies for sustainable development and financing for development; and in 2004, curbing transnational crime and bridging the digital divide. The outcomes of these discussions have served as input to the Secretary-General's annual reports on the follow-up to the Declaration and provided the focus of the annual reports of CEB since 2001. The intention was to contribute a system-wide perspective to the process of monitoring and reporting by the Secretary-General on progress achieved in implementing the Declaration. Beyond this, CEB has sought to shape a set of common and complementary approaches to guide the work of the United Nations system in advocacy, analysis, resource mobilization and operational activities in support of key system-wide goals embodied in the Millennium Declaration.

2. The work of CEB during the period under review (which includes its fall 2004 and spring 2005 sessions) was dominated by the preparations for the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration that will take place in the General Assembly in September 2005. This involved, in the first instance, an intensive process of reflection on the overall response of the system to the Millennium Declaration, as part of the system's determination to be held accountable for its role in supporting progress in its implementation. The focus of the reflection was on the impact that the Declaration has had on the coherence of the system's work and on the quality and effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration; on gathering, on a system-wide basis, assessments and lessons learned as to the strategies and interventions that best make for progress, particularly the linkages among them that most affect development outcomes and their sustainability, and on how the system can best advance them; and on collectively developing a vision of the way ahead for the system, encompassing a drive to further both policy coherence and managerial effectiveness. The highlights of this reflection have been gathered in a publication soon to be issued, entitled, "One United Nations — catalyst for progress and change: how the Millennium Declaration is changing the way the United Nations system works", which should be read in conjunction with the present report. The publication offers a comprehensive account of how organizations of the system are increasingly working together to help countries reach the goals of the Declaration, identifies the constraints and challenges in building the United Nations system into a cohesive force for progress and change, and outlines the conditions for, and the system's commitments to, enhancing its contribution to accelerating progress in the period ahead.

3. The United Nations system is deeply conscious of its responsibilities, through the quality of its interventions and the effectiveness of the collaborative work it is able to generate, for advancing the international community's commitment to multilateralism — of the challenge it faces of demonstrating that multilateralism does work and deliver. At the same time, the system's efforts for enhancing

coherence and effectiveness will ultimately succeed only if backed by genuine political will and adequate resources. The political force of the outcome of the September high-level event in the General Assembly will be crucial. It should generate a momentum capable of being sustained in the various intergovernmental bodies that provide policy direction to the organizations of the system, and of focusing and deepening the common guidance that the central intergovernmental organs provide to the system, both in respect of development policy and management of the common system.

4. Chapters II to VII of the present report highlight the outcomes of discussions in CEB and its High-Level Committees during the past year on substantive issues relevant to the system's implementation of the Millennium Declaration. These included issues, such as conflict prevention and curbing transnational crime, that CEB had previously taken up and to which it reverted during the period under review to follow up on its previous decisions. Chapter VI responds to a specific request from the Committee for Programme and Coordination for information on mechanisms to coordinate the fight against hunger, while chapter VII reverts to the issue of the United Nations system's support for Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Chapter VIII focuses on the continuing efforts of the system to strengthen its coherence at the country level, and chapters IX to XII cover management issues including staff safety and security, enhancing human resources management, the impact on management and programmes of the changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding, and United Nations system oversight.

II. Follow-up to the Millennium Summit: United Nations system contribution to the 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration

5. In 2004, CEB began to consider its contribution to the preparations for the 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. It decided that a special report focusing on the impact of the Millennium Declaration on the workings of the system and on the quality of the support that the system is extending to Member States would serve as a useful contribution to the 2005 review.

6. At its spring 2005 session, CEB reviewed the progress being made in preparing that report. The Secretary-General's own report to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly scheduled for September 2005 — "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005) — provided the overall context of the discussion. Executive heads expressed deep appreciation for the leadership of the Secretary-General and strong support for the thrust of his report. In particular, CEB welcomed the report's call for a comprehensive response, addressing in a balanced way development, security and human rights and their interlinkages. The crucial importance of a successful outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting for the whole of the system was emphasized. The Executive heads committed to engage their governing bodies and to use all available occasions until the September High-level Plenary Meeting to galvanize support for a successful outcome.

7. Against this background, CEB provided direction to the High-Level Committee on Programmes for the finalization of the special report on the response

of the United Nations system to the Millennium Declaration, "*One United Nations — catalyst for progress and change: how the Millennium Declaration is changing the way the United Nations system works*". The report will highlight the new orientations and approaches guiding the work of the United Nations system under the Declaration's broad themes — poverty eradication and sustainable development; human rights, democracy and governance; and prevention of armed conflicts. It will also set out the main directions for continued progress within the system in translating the vision of the Millennium Declaration into action.

8. The main messages are:

(a) The Declaration has broadened the perspectives of all parts of the system, sharpening the focus of what they do for countries, increasing the coherence of their joint activities and capturing the synergies made possible from working together;

(b) Joint programming and joint programmes, both global and national, are increasing the system's responsiveness and synergies in tailoring interventions to country needs;

(c) Deeper analysis and broader knowledge-sharing — of what works, what does not and why — are increasing the effectiveness and impact of the system's programmes;

(d) As the different parts of the United Nations system are able, by working better together, to maximize results in helping countries reach the Declaration's goals, the case for multilateralism will be greatly strengthened.

9. In the concluding chapter, the report will outline the main orientations that will guide further efforts by the organizations of the system to enhance the effectiveness of their support for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration:

(a) Overcoming fragmentation and achieving greater unity of purpose and action;

(b) Mobilizing all available resources and capacities within the system itself, promoting mutual reinforcement between their advocacy, normative and analytical work and operational activities, and engaging in concerted action with civil society;

(c) Strengthening and unifying the system's presence at the country level;

(d) Focusing on capacity development around shared priorities through:

(i) More purposeful management of knowledge and sharing of knowledge;

(ii) Greater coordination in the gathering and dissemination of data;

(iii) A more systematic sharing of best practices and success stories;

(iv) A common strategy for better exploiting information and communication technology (ICT);

(v) Building a system-wide culture around common security and development agendas and shared management objectives of transparency and accountability.

10. Underlying the concept of "one United Nations" is a concerted effort to build a system increasingly:

(a) Driven by goals and accountable for better, concrete results;

(b) Committed to deepening and sharing knowledge;

(c) Geared to optimize the sequencing of its interventions, tailoring programmes to country needs;

(d) Guided by an open approach to multilateralism and a deliberate effort to advance a multilateralism that works and delivers.

11. A number of specific initiatives under way will help shape and give specific direction to this overall effort. This is the overall framework within which the Director-General of the International Labour Organization is engaging the CEB system in the process of follow-up to the conclusions of the World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization, to launch policy coherence initiatives across the organizations of the system so as to examine interactions between investment, global growth and employment and what policies need to be pursued to achieve better overall results. Another illustration is a United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) initiative that has resulted in the setting up of an open-ended inter-agency task force to elaborate a Millennium Development Goal-based common agenda for collaborative work among organizations of the United Nations system focusing on economic development as a means for advancing the attainment of the development goals of the Millennium Declaration. Work is under way to identify priority areas for collaboration and develop a results-oriented and time-bound work plan among the organizations involved.

III. Bridging the digital divide and fostering inter-agency collaboration in information and communication technology

12. CEB and its High-Level Committees have continued to address ICT from two interrelated vantage points: first, the coherence of the policy advice that the system provides to countries in setting comprehensive, forward-looking strategies to harness information and communication technology for economic and social progress, and second, the imperative for the system to capitalize on the unprecedented opportunity that ICT offers the organizations of the United Nations system for the creation, sharing and management of knowledge.

Bridging the digital divide

13. The key objective of achieving a comprehensive and coherent United Nations system approach to ICT as a source of economic and social progress is being considerably advanced by the World Summit on the Information Society. Individually and collectively, including through the International Telecommunication Union-led High-level Summit Organizing Committee, organizations of the system are actively engaged in aligning their programmes with the outcome of the Geneva phase of the World Summit. The High-level Summit Organizing Committee, responsible for supporting at the inter-agency level the preparations for the second phase of the World Summit, has analysed the changing patterns of the digital divide, the emerging information society and its building blocks, and their implications for the work of the United Nations system in support

of development, including in particular the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

14. Many organizations within the system are providing policy advice on the formulation and implementation of national e-strategies, on regulatory reform and institutional development and on programmes and projects to improve connectivity, capacity and local content development. Initiatives within the system are multiplying to provide technical assistance and support for ICT applications in areas ranging from education and health to e-government and e-commerce. Nonetheless, the need remains for greater coordination of these efforts and their closer integration with the broader development agenda.

15. Inter-agency discussions have concluded that a more coherent and collaborative approach to ICT policy advice and programme support requires:

(a) Millennium Development Goal-focused e-strategies integrated into national development plans and priorities;

(b) Policy and regulatory reform that balances the advantages of an open and competitive environment with the need to serve the needs of the poor and underprivileged;

(c) Multi-stakeholder partnerships combining official, private and non-profit resources and capacities to support ICT for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals;

(d) Multilateral solutions capitalizing on the transnational character of the information technology revolution;

(e) Pro-poor business models;

(f) Joint and scaled-up efforts to promote connectivity and access and development of local ICT capacity, content and applications to advance the Millennium Development Goals;

(g) Innovative funding mechanisms.

16. Under the aegis of CEB, the High-Level Committee on Programmes, in close consultation with the High-level Summit Organizing Committee, is working on mainstreaming and integrating ICT into the broader development agenda, including through the elaboration of system-wide approaches and guidelines for use by country representatives and by the resident coordinator system. Working closely with the High-Level Committee on Management and its ICT Network, the High-Level Committee on Programmes is also focusing on developing a clear vision of a United Nations system-wide knowledge management system, its optimum functionality and implementation options.

Fostering inter-agency collaboration in information and communication technology

17. The system's ability to develop greater coherence in ICT policy advice and programme support within the framework of its development agenda depends in many ways on its ability to create, manage and share information and knowledge across the system more efficiently and effectively. Knowledge, information and data are the system's principal assets and a main source of its comparative advantage.

The system, however, has yet to take full advantage of these assets and create a seamless knowledge-based system to effectively capture, manage and disseminate data, information and other relevant assets across organizations and their constituencies. The aim is to leverage the wealth of information currently available within the United Nations system to maximize the impact and results of its programmes and activities.

18. Under the guidance of CEB, a system-wide ICT strategy is being elaborated as an essential component of the overall effort to enhance the system's cost-effectiveness and efficiency and strengthen its capacity to manage knowledge in ways that can maximize the support it provides to countries in using ICT for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

19. The strategy represents a major shift in the perception of the role of technology within the United Nations system, away from simply providing a technical infrastructure to exploiting its enabling role. The strategy addresses areas where consolidated operations can result in savings and focuses on ways in which a more effective use of the technology can result in more efficient operations. The strategy thus goes beyond technology implementation. It seeks to articulate the drivers for technology planning so as to ensure that any investment in technology aligns with the knowledge-based needs of the system.

20. Beyond establishing a framework to guide system-wide ICT coordination, the United Nations system ICT strategy has identified a significant number of concrete initiatives, of which eight have been selected for priority action: the ICT development network, the ICT services sourcing strategy, common application solutions, knowledge-sharing, enterprise resource planning systems, ICT governance and best practices, business case development and costing, and United Nations ICT training.

21. An ICT Steering Committee, composed of members of the High-Level Committee on Programmes, the High-Level Committee on Management and the ICT Network, provides the overall guidance for further work on the follow-up to the ICT strategy. The CEB secretariat continues to foster and facilitate the exchange of information among ICT strategy groups and organizations through the introduction of best practices in collaborative project management.

IV. Preventing and managing armed conflict

22. An increasingly important focus of inter-agency work is to enhance the system's support for an effective response by the international community to the Secretary-General's call for a strategic shift from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. This requires a collective approach to conflict prevention and calls for a deeper understanding of the causes of tensions within and between nations. It also implies a sustained system-wide effort to effectively integrate a conflict-prevention perspective in development programmes at the country level.

23. Building on previous discussions on the subject, CEB has given further consideration to strengthening the system's capacity for conflict prevention. The focus has been on (a) ways in which the United Nations work in the area of preventive diplomacy and mediation can be advanced; (b) furthering thinking on and practice of "structural prevention" to better prepare the system to face the

present-day threats to peace and security — including addressing the prevalence of poverty and inequality that exacerbate social and political tensions; (c) focusing on the immediate post-conflict period as the time when countries are most likely to fall into civil war; (d) strengthening the United Nations system's ability to help countries develop their own conflict-prevention institutions and processes; and (e) ensuring that United Nations strategies to address armed conflicts are far-sighted but realistic, taking into account actual capacities both within and outside the United Nations system.

24. CEB considered that the system's ability to diagnose and help resolve emerging conflicts will be enhanced by drawing more systematically on the diverse expertise that exists in various parts of the United Nations system and by basing the system's interventions on deeper analysis of its comparative advantages, including better utilizing the convening power of the United Nations and its capacity to bring together all actors that can contribute to conflict prevention. It considered that a set of instruments, similar to those developed by the United Nations in post-conflict situations, will also need to be developed in the area of conflict prevention.

25. In the same broad context, CEB stressed that development should continue to be addressed by the United Nations system in its own right, as well as in its linkages with security, especially since marginalization, social exclusion and differential access to natural resources have been identified as important root causes of conflict.

26. Steps identified by CEB to strengthen the system's collective capacity for conflict prevention include:

(a) Strengthening the United Nations system's capacity to act as a mobilizer, helping coordinate the international efforts of all actors to carry out prevention and peacebuilding strategies;

(b) Responding to economic dimensions of conflict in a more strategic way — for example, by exploring links between the management of natural resources and development, security and human rights;

(c) Giving greater attention to the potential threats posed by environmental problems by building additional capacity to analyse and address these threats.

27. CEB agreed that the system must work to ensure that its analysis is better informed by a vision of the interconnectedness of threats and of the different priorities that countries and people have. By deepening its understanding of different risk factors, the system will be able to develop appropriate strategies for mitigating their effects. The system is making progress from the present focus on sharing experiences and information towards more systematic analysis and common strategies for collaborative actions involving organizations of the system, but also non-United Nations actors.

V. Curbing transnational organized crime

28. When it first took up the issue of transnational organized crime, in April 2003, CEB recognized the need for strengthening collective action by the United Nations system in confronting the threats posed by transnational organized crime. Two basic considerations underlay this conclusion. First was that transnational organized crime, while not a new phenomenon, had grown in strength and severity over the

last decade, benefiting from technological innovations and establishing new links with terrorism. Second was the impact that transnational crime had on the key areas of the system's involvement: peace and security, social and economic development, the environment, human rights, democracy and good governance.

29. In 2004, CEB reviewed progress in the implementation of its previous conclusions on the subject and endorsed a package of measures aimed at building an effective system-wide response to curbing transnational crime.

30. Initial follow-up work has resulted in the identification of specific areas on which joint work should focus: links between ongoing conflicts and organized crime; interventions to counter trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants; efforts to stem trafficking in a variety of illicit commodities; and HIV/AIDS in prisons.

31. Other collaborative work, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime serving as lead agency, is currently under way in the following areas:

(a) Supporting the implementation of the relevant international legal instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols on trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in firearms, the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the 3 United Nations drug-control Conventions and the 12 international instruments on the prevention of terrorism;

(b) Furthering information collection, analysis and reporting, allowing for system-wide knowledge-sharing on trends in transnational crime;

(c) Developing a preventive approach within the United Nations system, including through awareness-raising and training measures for staff and peacekeepers;

(d) Enhanced cooperation with law enforcement and other relevant international organizations;

(e) Mainstreaming the issue of organized crime and related issues into United Nations development interventions at the country level;

(f) Joint projects in the area of rule-of-law assistance and capacity-building;

(g) Disseminating best practices, including through a knowledge network.

VI. Inter-agency collaboration against hunger

32. The following information on existing mechanisms to coordinate the fight against hunger has been included in the present report in response to a request by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-fourth session.

Collaborative work among United Nations food agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme

33. Within the United Nations system, three Rome-based United Nations organizations — the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) — complement and reinforce each other's activities to address the immediate and long-term challenges of fighting hunger and achieving food security. FAO provides technical expertise and policy guidance. IFAD provides loans and grants to help the rural poor to overcome poverty and gain the means to achieve food security. WFP provides food aid to respond to emergencies and contributes to economic and social development through such programmes as food-for-work and school feeding.

34. FAO, WFP and IFAD have developed strong collaboration in operational activities and policy development. At the country level, they are joining their respective expertise and resources to help smallholder farmers and other rural producers to increase productivity and incomes and reduce their vulnerability. By addressing the structural causes of food insecurity and poverty, the three agencies are helping to create the conditions for more rapid and balanced development. They support an approach that combines food assistance to prevent malnutrition with longer-term investments in agricultural production. The results of their actions are immediate access to food and improved livelihoods for populations in need.

35. In the context of emergencies, FAO and WFP carry out needs assessments and help develop a response on food security in coordination with other relief organizations. IFAD supports the efforts of affected peoples to rebuild normal lives by providing assistance to promote the transition to rehabilitation and development.

36. The three Rome-based agencies are also working together on policy issues to highlight the centrality of agricultural and rural development in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. This commitment was reflected in their joint launch, in cooperation with the Government of Italy, of the Millennium Development Project report in Rome.

United Nations system Standing Committee on Nutrition

37. The United Nations system Standing Committee on Nutrition is a partnership among United Nations organizations, Governments and NGOs, with the mandate to strengthen worldwide efforts to fight malnutrition. The Standing Committee analyses trends and raises awareness on nutrition issues, galvanizes action at the global, regional and national levels against malnutrition and promotes cooperation among United Nations agencies and partner organizations in support of national efforts to end malnutrition.

38. At its annual session held in March 2005 in Brazil, the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition reviewed the experience gained and lessons learned in strengthening food and nutrition components in national development plans to help meet the Millennium Development Goals and realize the human right

to adequate food. Using four country case studies (Angola, Bolivia, Brazil and Mozambique), the session increased understanding of the roadblocks to improving food and nutrition aspects in national development plans. The country case study synthesis presented a series of recommendations to the United Nations and to the four national Governments on how to strengthen efforts in these areas.

United Nations system Network on Rural Development and Food Security

39. The United Nations system Network on Rural Development and Food Security is a global partnership for tackling development challenges at the country level. Established in 1997 by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (now CEB), it brings together key actors for the achievement of the shared goals of food for all and rural poverty reduction. Comprising 20 United Nations organizations, the Network is an inter-agency mechanism for follow-up to the World Food Summit (1996) and World Food Summit: five years later (2002) and supports the International Land Coalition. The Network secretariat is managed by FAO, in close collaboration with IFAD and WFP. Its aims include (a) supporting efforts by Governments and the Network's partners to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action and rural development and food security programmes; (b) reinforcing ties between United Nations system organizations and other stakeholders, notably NGOs and civil society organizations; (c) fostering synergies among Network members; and (d) exchanging and disseminating information, experiences and best practices.

VII. Strengthening system-wide support for Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development

40. Since 2001, CEB has continued to give high priority to engendering and extending effective and coordinated support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Its main objective has been to provide policy guidance to ensure that United Nations system support for NEPAD remains responsive to the needs of Africa. During 2004, the High-Level Committee on Programmes, on behalf of CEB, undertook an in-depth examination of the system's support for NEPAD in the broad context of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

41. The United Nations system's commitment to NEPAD is shown in the readiness of CEB member organizations to align their priorities with those of NEPAD and to refocus existing inter-agency mechanisms on guiding the system's response to the support requirements of NEPAD.

42. As the implementation of NEPAD gathers momentum, African countries are placing growing emphasis on mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of its programmes, on building their technical expertise for the development and management of its programmes and on strengthening their institutions to better help them to achieve its goals.

43. The United Nations system's efforts to scale up support for NEPAD will place particular emphasis on:

(a) Providing assistance in integrating NEPAD priorities into the national development frameworks of African countries. This will, in turn, enable the United

Nations system to align its development support activities behind well-rooted, nationally owned development strategies consistent with NEPAD;

(b) Enhancing policy and operational coherence, including through more systematic communication and information-sharing, in supporting the implementation of commitments on NEPAD at the regional, subregional and country levels;

(c) Strengthening the United Nations system's technical support for the NEPAD secretariat, particularly in the performance of its roles of facilitation and resource mobilization for the implementation of NEPAD programmes;

(d) Expanding the United Nations system's technical and financial support for building institutional, managerial and technical capacities in Africa for domestic and external resource mobilization.

VIII. Increasing the effectiveness and coherence of United Nations system activities at the country level

44. Coherence in the delivery of services by organizations of the United Nations system at the country level, particularly in the context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, was high on the agenda of CEB during the year, and is expected to remain so in the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, and the September 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly.

45. In 2004, CEB took stock of progress in achieving greater coherence of United Nations system activities at the country level and considered further steps to maximize the collective impact of the system as a whole. It considered that one of the ways to achieve a better match between national priorities and United Nations system support of country efforts and a closer alignment of existing tools, particularly common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), with national policies and processes was to ensure a more systematic participation of non-resident agencies, many of which are engaged in the productive sector or infrastructure support, in the overall development cooperation effort at the country level. It welcomed the emphasis placed on this objective in General Assembly resolution 59/250.

46. CEB noted that advances had been made in ensuring that the national poverty reduction plan provided the key programme framework in each country; in aligning the common country assessments and UNDAF with national analytical and planning processes; and, more generally, in enhancing the responsiveness of UNDAF and other country programme instruments to national priorities. CEB stressed the need to improve modalities to ensure that the wealth of knowledge and expertise available throughout the system, including among the non-resident agencies, is made available to countries in ways that effectively respond to their needs. Improved dialogue and information-sharing, better knowledge management and increased use of ICT were viewed as the most promising and effective means to that end.

47. With regard to country-level instruments, CEB considered that the effort should focus on making maximum use of existing United Nations system tools and

instruments at the country level, rather than proposing new tools and mechanisms. In the same context, it was underscored that the resident coordinator system bears the key responsibility for harnessing the full potential of the system's knowledge and expertise in support of a country's development, and that for this purpose, a more inclusive mindset within the country teams is necessary and should be accompanied by measures to augment the resources available to the resident coordinator system.

48. Other measures addressed included:

(a) The need to tap expertise at the regional level for country-level activities through improved dialogue and information-sharing by and with country teams;

(b) Greater resort to lead agencies, when this appeared to be a more cost-effective approach, in order to pursue specific objectives at the country level;

(c) The development of new modalities of field representation, such as those being introduced between UNIDO and the United Nations Development Programme;

(d) The designation, at the country level, of focal points to liaise with non-resident agencies, so as to engender better awareness of their services.

49. The General Assembly resolution on the triennial comprehensive policy review is guiding further discussions on these issues at the inter-agency level. The United Nations system is committed to mobilizing all its assets to respond in a concerted and proactive way to the provisions of the resolution. A key result to be achieved is greater integration and alignment of the country-level activities of the United Nations system with national plans and priorities, under the leadership of national Governments. The active involvement of the system is being mobilized across the many different areas of action covered by the resolution, from the simplification and harmonization of processes and the strengthening of the resident coordinator system to monitoring and evaluation activities and capacity-building efforts.

50. To move this agenda forward, the High-Level Committee on Programmes is undertaking a review of the practical implications of General Assembly resolution 59/250 for its work programme and that of CEB. It is pursuing concrete ways for the High-Level Committee on Programmes and the United Nations Development Group to complement each other's work in ways that best exploit their respective strengths in advancing the objectives of the resolution and related conclusions adopted by CEB in 2004.

IX. Safeguarding staff security and safety

51. A main concern of the United Nations system continued to be the strengthening of system-wide security policies and infrastructures. CEB, through its High-Level Committee on Management, endorsed the new unified security management system. It reiterated its view that security, a prerequisite for programme delivery, is a core responsibility of Member States and should be funded centrally under the United Nations regular budget.

52. In view of the decision of the General Assembly to maintain the existing arrangements with regard to cost-sharing for safety and security, CEB, through the

High-Level Committee on Management, agreed to a new approach for the apportionment of 2006-2007 field-related security costs.

53. A number of other security-related issues being pursued include:

(a) Risk and threat assessments, including a risk management model and a recommendation for its immediate adoption by organizations as a tool to enable enhanced security management at the local, regional and headquarters levels; a revised Minimum Operating Security Standards policy as the new baseline standard for security at the field level; and recommendations related to aviation safety, including the need to develop a common aviation safety policy;

(b) Headquarters security, consisting of Headquarters Minimum Operating Security Standards for United Nations system-wide acceptance, including standards for the physical security of headquarters complexes, access control, training, weaponry, etc;

(c) Contingency planning and emergency preparedness, including annual surveys of organizations on actions taken by them to improve their security and emergency preparedness so as to provide guidance for those organizations that have yet to complete their emergency preparedness, and business continuity planning;

(d) Security costs, consisting of oversight of a worldwide census of staff and other employees covered under the security umbrella and including data on numbers of staff by location and contract type as the basis for the sharing of field-related security costs and for the distribution of premiums for the malicious acts insurance policy;

(e) Humanitarian air service liability issues and how organizations should cover the liabilities of their own staff on WFP-administered flights.

X. Enhancing human resources management

54. CEB also continued to provide oversight, through the High-Level Committee on Management and its Human Resources Network, of staff management policies and practices across the system with a view to promoting best practices, harmonization and administrative simplification. Issues addressed included:

(a) Measures to enhance inter-agency mobility, including the adoption by CEB of an inter-agency mobility policy statement;

(b) The development of a new inter-organizational mobility accord to replace the inter-organization agreement concerning the transfer, secondment or loan of staff among the organizations applying the United Nations common system of salaries and allowances;

(c) Initiatives to support staff and dependants living with HIV/AIDS;

(d) Harmonization of various remuneration packages offered by organizations of the common system to staff working at non-family duty stations;

(e) Efforts to provide employment opportunities for the spouses of staff members as an increasingly relevant factor in attracting and retaining staff and ensuring gender balance for jobs around the globe.

55. In response to the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of CEB, redesignate the Senior Management Service, it was agreed to rename the initiative the Senior Management Network to better reflect its character as a set of collaborative efforts to enhance the managerial capacity and performance of senior staff.

56. In addressing management issues, CEB, the High-Level Committee on Management and the Human Resources Network continued to engage in dialogue with representatives of staff bodies and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). As provided for in article 28 of the statute of ICSC, the Human Resources Network continued to coordinate and represent the collective views of the United Nations system executive heads before ICSC on all matters under examination by it.

Strengthening the international civil service

57. Since 1997, executive heads of organizations of the system that participate in the common system of pay and benefits have followed with keen interest developments in regard to the Secretary-General's proposal for a review and strengthening of ICSC. They welcomed the decision of the General Assembly in its resolution 57/285 to launch a panel on the strengthening of the international civil service. After careful review of its findings and recommendations, CEB expressed its deep appreciation for the thoughtful, balanced and constructive report presented by the Panel and strongly commended it to the Assembly.

58. CEB reiterated its strong wish for ICSC to strive towards greater relevance and concrete, tangible results, as a strong foundation for the reform and renewal of the international civil service. This requires a strong adherence to the spirit and the letter of the statute of the Commission, which stipulates that its members should be individuals of recognized competence who have had substantial experience of executive responsibility in public administration or related fields, particularly in personnel management.

59. CEB was deeply disappointed at the position taken by ICSC on the report of the Panel and expressed the hope that the General Assembly would respond in a positive manner to the key recommendations of the Panel.

XI. Improving financial resources management

60. Inter-agency collaboration in the financial and budgetary areas has received renewed attention in the work of CEB through the Finance and Budget Network of the High-Level Committee on Management. The focus has been on:

(a) Accounting standards within the United Nations system, including the review of the United Nations system accounting standards and other international accounting standards with a view to recommending a standard that could eventually be adopted by all United Nations organizations;

(b) Fraud prevention, as a follow-up to a report of the Board of Auditors to the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly (A/59/5, vol. II, chap. II) which, inter alia, requested that the United Nations system establish a corruption and fraud prevention mechanism. Work is being pursued with the objectives of sharing policy

documents and other guidance on fraud prevention, including advice and materials used in management training, and of developing a common framework for risk assessment and a shared definition of fraud, its types and categories;

(c) Results-based budgeting. During 2004, the High-Level Committee on Management considered the results of a study that reviewed different levels of results-based budgeting readiness within the system in terms of, among other things, existing internal results-based management frameworks, information systems, budget management, internal accountability frameworks and internal leadership. The common objective of implementation strategies for results-based budgeting will be to provide a strong framework for accountability, and at the same time put in place means for presenting to both donor partners and recipient countries the competing priorities that United Nations organizations face, and their resource requirements to achieve the mandated outcomes or results. Against this background, the High-Level Committee on Management adopted a common framework for results-based budgeting that can be adapted by each organization of the United Nations system in line with its own requirements;

(d) Simplification of inter-agency financial reporting; policies on support costs and methodological studies on how to report United Nations system spending on security;

(e) The relationship between regular and voluntary funding. Renewed attention is being given within the system to the development of common approaches to address the impact on management and programming of the changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding. A common concern is that the shift in the balance between regular and supplementary funding in favour of the latter may lead to a distortion of programme implementation if regular funding is inadequate to cover a critical mass of budgetary support for basic infrastructure and core activities. In the same context, a common policy has been elaborated for dealing with contributions to which donors attach conditions that affect procurement and staff recruitment.

XII. Pursuing United Nations system oversight

61. CEB member organizations continued to participate actively in the review and follow-up of specific recommendations emanating from oversight reports by the Joint Inspection Unit, the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Priority attention is given to maintaining the highest levels of transparency and accountability, strict compliance with established rules and regulations and enhancing the capacity of the United Nations system for oversight and audit.

62. The main focus of oversight in the programme area is on strengthening programme management and accountability within the system. Relevant oversight reports have focused on (a) the extent of utilization within the United Nations system of results-based management concepts and practices; (b) the evaluation of factors relevant to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, starting with the goal of universal primary education; and (c) linkages between headquarters and field activities in respect of poverty reduction strategies and programme implementation. In the management area, reports have included those entitled "Review of the headquarters agreements concluded by the organizations of the United Nations system: human resources issues affecting staff" (see A/59/526)

"Harmonization of the conditions of travel throughout the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/2004/2) and "Procurement practices within the United Nations system" (see A/59/721). CEB regularly presents its collective views on the system-wide reports of the Joint Inspection Unit to the General Assembly.

63. During 2004, collective views of organizations of the system and related coordination efforts were shared with the Office of Internal Oversight Services in the context of its report on the theme "Linkages between headquarters and field activities: a review of best practices for poverty eradication within the framework of the Millennium Declaration" (E/AC.51/2005/2), prepared in accordance with a request of the Committee on Programme and Coordination (A/59/16, para. 399). The Office of Internal Oversight Services report examined the effectiveness of headquarters/field linkages and identified best practices that should be promoted. The Office of Internal Oversight Services advanced several recommendations that complement the work programme and ongoing initiatives of CEB, including enhancing collaboration among inter-agency coordinating bodies, introducing a more strategic approach to system-wide knowledge management networks and increasing information exchange between country teams and non-resident agencies and regional commissions.

Annex I

Outcomes of work by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the High-Level Committee on Programmes in the programme area, 2004/05

Issue	*Outcomes*
1. **Preparations for the 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration**	• Report prepared on the response of the United Nations system to the Millennium Declaration as a contribution to the processes leading to a comprehensive review of progress in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration at the September 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. The report, "One United Nations — catalyst for progress and change: how the Millennium Declaration is changing the way the United Nations system works", highlights the new orientation of the United Nations system under the Declaration's broad themes, including poverty eradication and sustainable development, human rights, democracy and governance, and prevention of armed conflicts. It also sets out the main elements for accelerated progress in the decade ahead
2. **Curbing transnational organized crime**	• Adoption by CEB of a package of measures to build an effective system-wide response to transnational organized crime, an issue identified by the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change as one of the six clusters of threats facing the world today • Areas for collaboration identified and inter-agency work under way on: analysis of the links between ongoing conflicts and organized crime; interventions to counter trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants; efforts to stem trafficking in illicit commodities; and HIV/AIDS in prisons • Work in progress on a programme of activities in eight cross-sectoral areas: implementation of the relevant international legal instruments; enhanced knowledge-sharing; development of a preventive approach within the United Nations system; enhanced cooperation with law enforcement and other relevant organizations; inclusion of related issues in development interventions and instruments; joint law assistance and capacity-building projects; promotion of best practices and awareness-raising
3. **Bridging the digital divide**	• High-Level Committee on Programmes-led work under way, in consultation with the International Telecommunication Union High-level Summit Organizing Committee for the World Summit on the Information Society in November 2005, on mainstreaming and integrating information and communication technology into the broader Millennium Development Goal agenda, including through the development of system-wide approaches and guidelines for use at the field level

Issue	*Outcomes*
	• A United Nations system ICT strategy adopted with the aim of enhancing cost-effectiveness, strengthening system-wide knowledge management and enhancing the capacity of the system to support countries in using ICT for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. The High-Level Committee on Programmes is collaborating with the High-Level Committee on Management and its ICT Network to develop the business cases for the ICT strategy
4. Prevention of armed conflict	• Increased interaction and knowledge-sharing between the organizations of the system and the political departments of the United Nations Secretariat to ensure enhanced use of the diverse expertise within the United Nations system
5. System-wide support for Africa's development and the New Partnership for Africa's Development	• An in-depth review of the system's support for Africa and NEPAD and the way ahead for the system, carried out by the High-Level Committee on Programmes on behalf of CEB
6. Increasing the effectiveness and coherence of United Nations system activities at the country level	• Work in progress related to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. A task force, under the aegis of the High-Level Committee on Programmes, has been created to identify areas requiring a system-wide response to ensure coherence between the operational and policy dimensions of the system's work. It is pursuing concrete ways for the High-Level Committee on Programmes and the United Nations Development Group to complement each other's work
7. Strategies for sustainable development	• Implementation of system-wide approaches to the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, moving forward in the context of inter-agency collaborative arrangements CEB established in 2003

Annex II

Outcomes of work by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the High-Level Committee on Management in the management area, 2004/05

Issue	*Outcomes*
1. Safeguarding staff security and safety	• Agreement among CEB member organizations, through the High-Level Committee on Management, on a new unified security management system • A new approach for the apportionment of 2006-2007 field-related security costs agreed upon • A worldwide census of staff and other employees covered under the United Nations security umbrella undertaken. Census data used as the basis for sharing field-related security costs and for the distribution of premiums for the malicious acts insurance policy • A risk management model promulgated as a tool to enable United Nations organizations to enhance security management at the local, regional and headquarters levels; a revised Minimum Operating Security Standards policy adopted as the new baseline standard for security at the field level • Headquarters Minimum Operating Security Standards for United Nations system-wide acceptance, including standards for the physical security of headquarters complexes, access control, training, weaponry and so forth adopted • Annual survey of actions completed by individual organizations to improve their security and emergency preparedness to guide those organizations that have yet to complete their emergency preparedness and business continuity planning
2. Staff management policies and practices	• Harmonization of various entitlements offered by organizations of the common system to staff working at non-family duty stations • Lump-sum approach for the relocation grant introduced • Development of communities of interest/practice and partnerships in management areas with other international organizations, academic institutions and other global institutions • Increased efforts under way to provide employment opportunities for the spouses of staff members, including through collaboration with Permits Foundation and Partnerjob.com
3. Strengthened managerial capacity across the United Nations system	• In response to the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of CEB, redesignate the Senior Management Service, the High-Level Committee on Management, on behalf of CEB, renamed the Senior Management Service the Senior

Issue	*Outcomes*
	Management Network to reflect its character as a set of collaborative efforts to enhance the managerial capacity and performance of senior staff, in line with existing CEB terminology
	• **Inter-agency collaborative arrangements put in place for the development and implementation of a leadership development programme that would underpin the Senior Management Network**
4. Geographical representation	• **Annual survey on United Nations organizations' policies and practices conducted**
5. Strengthening the international civil service	• **A common position established by CEB on the report of the Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service. While expressing appreciation for the Panel's thoughtful, balanced and constructive report and strongly commending it to the General Assembly, CEB conveyed its disappointment over ICSC comments on the Panel's report and requested the General Assembly to respond positively to the key recommendations of the Panel**
6. Relations with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)	• **As provided for under article 28 of the statute of ICSC, continued coordination and representation of the collective views of executive heads of the system before ICSC on all matters under examination by it through the Human Resources Network**
7. HIV/AIDS in the United Nations system workplace	• **Initiatives undertaken through the task force on HIV/AIDS in the United Nations system workplace to support staff and dependants living with HIV/AIDS, including through a revised booklet, a learning strategy, distribution of post-exposure prophylaxes kits; and action report covering guidelines for access to care and support, a training video and other promotional work to sensitize managers, human resources specialists and other staff about the issue across the United Nations system**
8. Inter-agency mobility	• **An inter-agency mobility policy statement adopted by CEB**
	• **New inter-organizational mobility accord developed to replace the inter-organization agreement concerning transfer, secondment or loan of staff among the organizations applying the United Nations common system of salaries and allowances**
	• **Baseline survey on inter-agency mobility designed and conducted**
9. Strengthened staff-management relations	• **Dialogue undertaken with representatives of staff bodies on conditions of employment**
10. Regular maintenance of various statistical databases on behalf of the common system	• **Annual personnel statistics of all organizations of the common system gathered and produced as the only United Nations system-wide report and extensively referred to by Member States, United Nations organizations, ICSC, etc.**

Issue	*Outcomes*
11. Administration of collective agreements with the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) and the International Association of Conference Translators (AITC) on behalf of the common system	• On behalf of organizations of the common system, coordination of relations with the Associations of freelance interpreters (AIIC) and translators, editors, revisers and précis writers (AITC), including mediating disputes and setting pay rates
12. Development of accounting standards within the United Nations system	• Approved changes recommended to United Nations system accounting standards. Work under way to develop accounting standards for adoption by organizations of the system, together with implications for each organization, and to elaborate recommendations of relevant standards that are more prescriptive and reflect best accounting practices, for incorporation into the United Nations system accounting standards, as appropriate
13. Impact on management and programmes of the changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding	• A policy statement adopted by the High-Level Committee on Management on behalf of CEB recommending that organizations of the system forgo voluntary contributions to which conditions affecting procurement and staff recruitment are attached. Exceptions to be granted by executive heads only when circumstances warrant and kept to a strict minimum • Inter-agency agreement reached on simplified and standardized financial reporting among United Nations organizations
14. Support costs for extrabudgetary activities	• A survey undertaken to draw a global picture and define a common set of principles in the current policies and practices related to the direct charging of execution and support costs to projects and activities financed through extrabudgetary funds
15. United Nations system wide total expenditure on security	• A survey undertaken to assess the total value of security-related expenditures in the United Nations system
16. Financial reporting	• As mandated by the General Assembly, biennial CEB report formulated on the budgetary and financial situations of organizations of the United Nations system
17. United Nations ICT strategy	• A United Nations system ICT strategic framework adopted to guide inter-agency work in this area with agreed priority areas to be pursued
18. United Nations Extranet project	• CEB member organizations now connected to the United Nations system Extranet, which has the capability of hosting applications of interest to member organizations. Further work on the Extranet under way to identify opportunities that meet the shared information needs of United Nations system organizations and networks

Issue	*Outcomes*
19. Procurement issues: global contracts in the ICT area	• Development of a United Nations system ICT services sourcing strategy identified as a priority action for the ICT Network. The resulting business case will determine the best approach for participating United Nations system organizations to consolidate and capitalize on ICT outsourcing opportunities
20. United Nations system search engine	• Work under way to index websites of United Nations system organizations through a United Nations contract with Google